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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a presentation on available Macintosh computer software for learning Japanese. The software systems described are categorized by their emphasis on speaking, writing, or reading, with a special section on software for young learners. Software that emphasizes spoken language includes "Berlitz for Business Japanese," "CORE-NE Japanese," "Dynamic Japanese," and "Learn to Speak Japanese." For the study of written Japanese, recommendations include "Blackbelt Japanese," "Fundamental Japanese," "Kana," "Kanalab," "Kanji Exercises," "KanjiCard," "KanjiWorks Advanced Version," "MacSunrise Script 2000," "Spectra Kanji," and "World Geography." Reading-oriented programs include "AutoGloss/J," "CATERS," "MacJDic," "Mikan," and "Understanding Written Japanese." Two programs are recommended for younger readers: "All-in-One Language Fun!" and "Just Grandma and Me." Each listing offers system requirements, price, and a 1-page review of the program. Addresses for software developers and suppliers are appended. (NAV)

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Computer-Assisted Language Learning for Japanese on the Macintosh: An Update of What's Available

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ACTFL '95

Anaheim, CA

(Session #182, 8:30 a.m., November 19, 1995, Hilton Malibu)

FL023761

Goal: This session will provide an overview of some of what is available for computer-assisted Japanese language instruction using the Macintosh. Attendees will be able to see demonstrations of some materials and learn how materials might be used inside and/or outside of the classroom.

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Preliminary Acknowledgements, Notes, and Keys:

1. All of us would like to thank the National Council of Secondary Teachers of Japanese for sponsoring this ACTFL session and the institutions where we work for sponsoring our attendance. Our thanks go out to various software developers and distributors who made copies available for review. I would also add my thanks to the Center for Global Partnership/The Laurasian Institution/JALEX, to Charles Reinecke, to Fred Lorish, and to my co-presenters at this conference, as well as to Township Dist. 214 Elk Grove H.S. for the printing costs. (CD)

2. We highly recommend Mangajin magazine as a source of information on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)) for the Macintosh or the IBM-compatibles. Issue #39 (October, 94) contained "A Comprehensive Guide to Computer Assisted Language Learning." Most recent issues contain at least one software review, and all contain advertisements of products on the market.

3. Persons with e-mail may wish to subscribe to the JTIT-L (Japanese Teachers and Instructional Technology Listserve). To subscribe, send an e-mail with the subject line blank to LISTSERV@psuvm.psu.edu. The contents of the message should be merely SUBSCRIBE JTIT-L Your Name.

4. Some of the following are not truly CALL programs but were included because we thought they be of interest to at least some of those in the audience. Some are reviews based on previous versions or IBM versions that we know are being modified for the Macintosh System 7, while some are announcements by their creators or contact persons. We make no claim that our list is exhaustive.

5. Space limitations prevent inclusion of most of the software reviewed in Fred Lorish and Cliff Darnall's '92 ACTFL review of Macintosh CALL software. Some of the software is no longer available but much is.

6. JLK refers to the Japanese Language Kit, a set of system extensions that allows Macintosh computers running system 7.1 or better to display and handle Japanese text. It is available directly from Apple to educational and governmental institutions at $137. Alternatively, KanjiTalk 7, the Japanese-language operating system for the Macintosh in Japan, can be used whenever JLK is required. We have indicated whether or not the JLK is necessary. In some cases it is not necessary but allows for greater options for use of the program.

7. Some programs list color monitors as required but in fact will work on a gray-scale screen. If you have a gray-scale powerbook, for example, check with the developer to see if it will run. *(Notes are continued on next page.)*

8. Please note that these reviews are available on the internet at http://www.sla.purdue.edu/fll/JapanProj/ACTFLreviews/.

Also, a hard-copy of these reviews can be obtained through the Center for the Improvement of the Teaching of Japanese for a check for $3.00 to cover their printing, shipping and handling costs:

Japanese Language Teachers Network
ATTN: Barbara Shenk
University High School
1212 West Springfield Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801
tel 217/244-4808 fax 217/333-4064 bshenk@uni.uiuc.edu

9. There are many possible **venues** for use of CALL materials. Some of the reviews suggest what we feel were the most appropriate ones, using the following codes:

WhGrp	Whole Group--a single copy is used on a classroom computer with a large monitor with the whole class
SmGrp	Small Group--a small group or individual uses it on the one classroom computer during class
CmpLb	Computer lab--the entire class goes there, where we assume that there are enough computers and software copies to put only one or two students per computer
RscRm	Resource Room--Students go to use independently when they do not have class; purposes include reference, remediation, additional practice, and enrichment.
SlfSt	Self Study (independent of a class)
MatPr	Materials Preparation by Teacher

Software Emphasizing the Spoken Language:

Berlitz for Business Japanese

(Bright Star Technology, Berlitz Publishing Co.)

System Requirements: Mac II or better, 256-color monitor, System 6.0.7 or newer, CD-ROM drive, 4MB of free RAM, 20MB hard disk space, microphone (optional)

Price: $75 from Stone Bridge Press (Also available from Lingo Fun)

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

As its subtitle "Survival Software for the Business Traveler" suggests, Berlitz for Business Japanese is a neatly packaged crash course in Japanese for business people. As you start the program, you are greeted by your personal tutor "Sensei", a samurai character clad in a kimono with a topknot. In fact, with its extensive use of beautiful animation and crisp audio (stereo), it makes you feel as if a real person is tutoring you one-on-one. The animation is very well-done; in fact, the package claims that you can learn from watching the accurate lip movements of the characters.

The structure of the program is much like that of a language book for travelers. It begins with language essentials which cover basic sounds and writing systems. Here you not only listen to Sensei's lectures, but also get to practice pronouncing sounds and recognizing kana. If you have a microphone, you can record your own pronunciation and compare it with Sensei's. (Although his pronunciation is fairly good, Sensei is not a native speaker.) The second part presents basic words, greetings, useful expressions, and a few basic grammar points. The section on expressions is much like a phrase book, containing sentences like "This is my first trip to Japan", "I have an appointment with Mr. Ogawa", and "Send me the contracts, please." Of course, the grammar necessary to produce such sentences is not presented.

The main part of the program deals with typical situations business travelers may encounter; arriving at an airport, checking into a hotel, conducting business in person and on the phone, dining, traveling around, and shopping. Each of these sections has one main dialog where you can participate in place of one of the characters. They also contain a lot of related words, phrases, and additional expressions. The last three sections talk about entertainment and leisure,

geography, history, etc. Also, every time you leave a section for another, the program presents you with a small window giving you a bit of Japanese culture or a traveling tip with a couple of sentences. Also included in the package is a game called "Tokyo subway game," which provides you a good way to familiarize yourself to the Tokyo subway system and the names of stations while at the same time reviewing material from the various sections.

This program is obviously not intended for high school students, but its cultural component may be useful in a resource room context.

Most appropriate venues for use: RscRm, SlfSt

CORE-NE Japanese

(Contact Person: Tsuda, Kazuo)

System Requirements: World Wide Web access; modem; System 7.0 or above; 2.5 MB free RAM; Japanese Language Kit req.

Price: Free for those willing to commit to piloting during 1996-1997

Announcement by Kazuo Tsuda, United Nations International School (NYC, NY)

CORE-NE Japanese is a series of Hypercard software and lesson plans that will be made available through a soon-to-be-announced World Wide Web site as early as February, 1996. The program is being written and sponsored by the Northeast Association of Secondary Teachers of Japanese(NEASTJ) and a National Council of Secondary Teachers of Japanese (NCSTJ) task force committee which includes Geraldine Cater, Masako Kahata, Cyrus Rolbin, Masatoshi Shimano, and Kazuo Tsuda

CORE-NE Japanese is a beginning based call program with weekly lesson plan. Each program consists of one theme units which related to CORE-NE ACTIVITY (ACTIVITY AND GAME SECTION) interests of today's students of Japanese. The themes include an exchange party and youth culture. There are several main characters in the story, namely, Japanese exchange students and American students in a northeast region school. Learners can listen to personal information of these students in the beginning level.

CORE-NE Japanese is related to the Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the weekly lesson plan. Each program is related to one weekly lesson.

Stage 1: INTRODUCTION (Setting communicative outcome-based objectives) - Presents new material while involving learners actively in a situation or context likely to be encountered - Uses learners' ability to guess

Stage 2: ORIENTATION (Providing a variety of examples) - Shows meaning visually - Gives abundant opportunities to listen and speak - Develops learners' ability to guess - Confirms learners' recognition of the material to be learned in the unit

Stage 3: PRACTICE - Uses variety of activities: drills, structured Q&A, games, pair/group work - Corrects learners' errors when necessary - Confirms learners' comprehension of new material

Stage 4: FLUENCY a) Involve learners actively in a situation or context likely to be encountered - Encourage learners to interact actively in communication -

Make sure there is an information gap between/among speakers - Keep the conversation flow (more than one Q&A) b) Minimize teacher control - Minimize teacher talk during live interaction - Do not correct errors during interaction; give appropriate feedback afterward

(This list was adapted from a similar one presented at the Japan Foundation Language Center 1995 Summer Workshop in Santa Monica): Participants will: 1) Familiarize themselves with the use of computers and modems 2) Learn and practice with the JP-high Net (core-ne) as a means of planning lessons and sharing ideas and materials with teachers at other schools, and 3)discuss the lesson plan and contact participants using JP-high Net (core-ne)from their homes or schools.

Dynamic Japanese Disc 1, Disc 2

(DynEd)

System Requirements: CD-ROM drive; System 7.0 or above; 2.5 MB free RAM; JLK not required

Price: $350 (two disc set)

Review by Kazuo Tsuda, United Nations International School (NYC, NY)

Dynamic Japanese is a beginning listening based CALL program. The program consists of ten theme units which related to the needs and interests of today's students of Japanese. The themes are Names and Places, Jobs and Family, Numbers and Time, Family Schedule, Seasons, Weather, Times of Day, Likes and Dislikes, Kana Practice, Dictation's and Fill-Ins. There are several main characters in the story, a teacher's family and a doctor's family and a wealthy family in Japan. Learners can listen to personal information about their families in the beginning level.

The sound quality is excellent. Dynamic Japanese is based on spoken Japanese. Students learn a lot of listening comprehension from the program. Although Dynamic Japanese creates an immersion type lesson, students find the short-term phases repeated. The syllabus is based on their ideas: ' Students at the foundation level are in an 'embryonic' stage of learning. They cannot be expected to generate original language before they have internalized the basic vocabulary and key structures necessary to express basic concepts.'(DynED)

The translation(English) is useful for students to understand the lesson. but the teacher asks students not to use this key often. Students use more repeated button to listen to the contents of the lesson. Students also can record their voice and check their pronunciation progress. The program keeps the records of their progress and study times.

The visual quality helps for students to understand the lesson. Students can also check the text of spoken sentences. They can read these texts. The student can control or interrupt a lesson at any time to pause , repeat, record or exit to another lesson. Response time is also fast. Students enjoy controlling the program.

As a teacher, however, I have some concerns. The program is made for two different audiences - high school students and business people. These two audiences have different needs . The difference needs create some conflict in the design of the program. I also find the examples to be poorly chosen. The Spartan life of the teacher in Japan is not a typical example of Japanese life. I

would mention a couple of other minor points as well. Questions are formulated for an immersion type of program; however, theses questions may not suitable for other orientation. Moreover, some questions do not give a clear directions for finding the answer.

Learn to Speak Japanese

(Hyperglot--part of The Learning Company)

System Requirements: CD-ROM drive; 2.1 MB free RAM; 952 KB of hard disk space if run from CD; JLK not required

Price: $99 list. Approximate street price through computer mail order: $55

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

Learn to Speak Japanese consists of twenty lessons. Topics include self-introduction and basic personal information, likes and dislikes, offering and requesting, telling time, using past tense, making suggestions, indicating this and that, and asking where something is. Lessons 10 and 20 are "aural" (should be "oral") tests, upon completion of which a certificate can be printed.

The first lesson begins with the student being introduced to the family of a young woman named Masako. Each character is sketched, and the lips move to indicate which character is speaking. A list of new words written is kana is available with English translations. The Japanese or English side of the list can be hidden. Here as elsewhere in the program, the user can record his or her voice to compare with the sample. A game at the end of the lesson has the user listen to the family members introduce themselves again, this time without lip movement by the character, and then click on the character.

The program has utilities that are easily referenced. The first is a six-hundred word dictionary which displays Japanese entries in kana or *roomaji* and allows the user to search for English and Japanese words. Each word is recorded with the voices of two native speakers. The second reference tool is grammar notes to accompany each of the lessons. Key sentences of the lesson are listed with brief grammar-translation notes tied to each word in the kana sentence, which is something many learners will surely desire. The sample sentences are recorded for playback. The final reference tool is a kana tutor with three main parts. The first is a kana charts which also include columns such as *ga*, *gi*, *gu*, *ge*, *go* next to the basic columns of the syllabary. The student can click on the characters to hear them pronounced and shown in roman script. The charts offer brief but overly-simplified notes on the use of kana to represent various sounds. A second part of the tutorial is a game where the computer pronounces a character and shows it in roman script and has the learner try to select it from a table of ten characters. The third part is a kana-reading exercise where a word is given in hiragana and English and the user must type it in English. The 150 words can be studied as flashcards first. (Learners can get additional practice

from **Hiragana Word Torture** and **Katakana Word Torture** games which are free on the CD-ROM.)

Although there are several useful features, problems of limited sound quality, oversimplification, and a tendency to translate directly from English rather than teach more idiomatic Japanese are definite weaknesses. The voices are obviously "recorded" (none of the recordings is of CD quality), the cue sounds in the hiragana game are particularly muffled, and the *yoku dekimashita* used throughout sounds somewhat wooden. Having more than one speaker's voice recorded is good for developing listening comprehension, but sometimes the intonation varies considerably between the two speakers, which might lead the learner to conclude that intonation is not important. Notes on the kana are overly simplified: there is no stroke order indicated; there is no reference to consonant-glide combination syllables such as きゃ, きゅ, きょ; the pronunciation of the particle -は is discussed but not the particle -へ; and the use of -う to extend an /-o/ is mentioned but not the use of -い to extend an /-e/ sound. Moreover, there is little reference to the situation in which certain oral expressions are used, and examples are sometimes misleading. *O-genki-desu-ka* is simply translated as "how are you" without comments on usage and is included in Masako's brother's self-introduction, even though this expression would rarely if ever be used when meeting someone for the first time. This tendency to translate directly from English rather than teach more idiomatic Japanese is also evident in examples such as *Watashi-wa Itoo-desu. Anata-no namae-wa nan-desu-ka* . These problems limit the value of what is an attractively low-priced program.

Most appropriate venues for use: SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Software Emphasizing the Study of Written Characters:

Blackbelt Japanese Set 1

(Rising Wave; Educational Sales through Bess Press)

System Requirements: CD-ROM; 256-color mode; 5 MB min of free RAM; JLK not required

Price: $99; Teacher's Version (not reviewed--also allows for individual and class progress tracking) $129; lab pack $500

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

Blackbelt Japanese Set 1 is a kanji learning feature with two very strong features from the point of view of high school learners: it has beautiful graphics and it is fun! Students are greeted with relaxing music as they first open the program and a beautiful landscape. They can then, if they choose, proceed through traditional Japanese architecture surrounded by beautiful mountains to a hall of languages with a door for Japanese. Students then choose between shoji-style doors marked hiragana, katakana, or kanji. Any of these lead to lists of generally eight characters each that students must master on their way to earning a blackbelt. Set 1 allows the student to earn blackbelts in hiragana and katakana and white and red belts in Kanji after the learning of two sets of 96 character each (192 total). Kanji in the white belt, for example, include Days, Family 1, Get Together, Numbers 1, Numbers 2, People 1, School 1, School 2, School 3, Self 1, Time 1, and Trip 1.

A game format is used throughout. Tiles are laid out side by side and partially stacked as in a common Japanese game. Each kanji tile has a matching picture tile, while the kana tiles (including syllables such as *cha*, *chu*, *cho*) have matching characters in roman script. When matching tiles are clicked on, they may be removed from the board, but only if each is not sandwiched between other tiles. In the learning mode, students have a key to the right of the screen which shows the matching tiles and attempt to make the matches within 120 seconds. The sessions are watched by a stern-looking shaven-head martial arts student sitting on the left of the screen. If the student fails to do it under 120 seconds, a message appears from the Japanese Sensei, which admonishes him to practice harder. When students are ready, they enter the challenge mode, where they have only ninety seconds and no key to refer to. At the start of the challenge match, the martial arts figure jumps to his feet in a battle-ready position. As each

list is successfully completed, a huge, fat red ogre with four eyes begins to dance and grunt, only to be stared to increasing smaller size by a smiling, confident, improving trainee. Once all the lists in a belt have been completed, the student faces a final challenge. The martial arts student sits across from his master teacher, who sends "mental" images (pictures for kanji study, *roomaji* for kana study across the screen to his disciple. The student must click on the appropriate character from a display of ten before the image arrives.

The program will surely be very popular with students. I have some concerns. Response to tile selection is sluggish, at least on the PowerMac 5200/75 LCs our school uses. Therefore, students have to click way ahead of the machine in order to beat the time; and if one is doing such, it becomes very hard to correct an error. The introduction scenes are beautiful but time consuming, and the ogre-dance is also time consuming though admittedly amusing. Because the tiles are small, it is sometimes hard to distinguish them. Lists are pre-determined, stroke orders are not indicated, and compounds or phrases are not included. Still, Kanji Blackbelt is very enjoyable, and it may be the hook that gets a lot of high school students into the study of what is a difficult part of the language and a chance to make any level of a high school class more fun.

(Note: A teacher version (not reviewed) also allows for individual and class progress tracking.)

Most appropriate venues for use: SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Fundamental Japanese (Do Hiragana, Count in J., Do KANJI Grade 1)

(Kojima)

System Requirements: System 7; 256-color /16-shade gray); 2.1 MB free RAM; 15 MB disk space for full set; JLK not required

Price: Set of All Parts: $63 ($53 each for 6 or more) Do KANJI Grade 1 only: $39 ($29 each for 6 or more)

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

Fundamental Japanese by Kenji Kojima includes three separate programs with a common home page. The page layout is attractive and uncluttered throughout. **Do Hiragana** includes a brief introduction to hiragana (but only to say it is "one of two versions of the English alphabet") and then presents the kana column by column and then as a whole chart. Students can hear the sound of each character they click on and toggle roman script in/out. Charts are also available for syllables such as *ga, gi, gu, ge, go* and combinations such as *kya, kyu, kyo*. Another section allows students to practice writing the characters on screen. They can see an animation of a pencil quickly tracing over the characters to demonstrate the stroke order and direction for characters. Students then have the chance to practice writing by tracing over the characters with a mouse, but there is no correction or alert given if they are tracing the characters in the wrong direction or order. Students are given the chance to read words written with the hiragana learned to date and can hear the words pronounced and see translations of the words with a click of the mouse. The sample words are read as character rather than with natural cadence and intonation. They can also trace out the words, but his time there is not only no correction but also no stroke direction/order model conveniently available. Finally, students work from *roomaji* cues to choose the hiragana character needed to complete words. An appendix shows the katakana syllabary, but no tutorial for katakana seems to be available.

Count in Japanese shows sets of numbers and allows students to click on individual numbers or hear the numbers counted off in ascending or descending order. Numbers are shown in kanji and hiragana, with the corresponding arabic numeral briefly flashed on the screen. One screen even includes *hyaku-cho* (1,000,000,000,000,000). Clicking on any number button invokes its pronunciation.

Do KANJI Grade 1 begins with a chart showing the kanji taught in the first grade kanji of Japanese schools. The student clicks on the kanji he wants to study. A page for that kanji appears with the character in a two-inch font in the middle.

On the left and right are the kun- and on-readings written in hiragana and katakana respectively (but there is no pronunciation samples available for them). Stroke order and direction can be overlaid on the kanji along with hints on writing the character properly; alternatively, the animated pencil-trace which demonstrates stroke order and direction can be summoned. A handful of compound words made using other first-grad kanji are shown. When the student clicks on one, the compound word is pronounced (this time with natural intonation and cadence) and the meaning and pronunciation (in *roomaji* with accents indicated through bold face) appear on the screen. When the student feels he has mastered the kanji, he can click a box which marks that kanji on the original screen showing the kanji table. Exercises in which the student chooses the correct kanji to complete a compound word or types the pronunciation are also available.

Fundamental Japanese has several useful features but I have areas of concern. Strong points include the attractive and easy-to-use interface and the methods of showing stroke direction as well as stroke order. Having sound is certainly a plus. Moreover, if the computer has a microphone, students can record their own pronunciation of a compound to compare it with the sample. I have some concerns, however, in addition to those mentioned above. Although the kanji portion has the best soundtrack of the three, still the voice tracks overall sounds "computerized" in nature, perhaps due to the compression involved. The kanji study portion, moveover, could have been improved by including mnemonics for the kanji, by providing sample sentences showing how the kanji and compounds are used, and by giving the student the ability to create his/her own sublists for study. Moreover, a list of first grade kanji may be of less value to non-native speakers of Japanese than to native speaker; and certain compounds made from first grade kanji such as *tsuki-hi* and *shinrin* are surely low priority words for non-native speakers learning the language.

Most appropriate venues for use: CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Kana

(Kazumi Hatasa, Mariko Kaga, and Peter Henstock)

System Requirements: HyperCard Player 2.1 or higher, 2.2MB of disk space; JLK not required

Price: Freeware available for download at ftp://intersc.tsukuba.ac.jp/pub/KANA/

(or through http://www.sla.purdue.edu/academic/fll/Japanese/).

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

Kana is a program which introduces hiragana and katakana and provides practice in recognizing them. The hiragana stack and the katakana stack have the same structure, consisting of three sections: Presentation, Flashcards, and Guessing Game. In the presentation section, you first specify which row you would like to

look at. Let's suppose you chose the first row ("aiueo"). One presentation cycle goes like this: First, you are presented with a simply line drawing of a person ice-skating and hear the audio say "Ann is good at ice-skating". When you press the proceed button, the shape of hiragana "a" gets gradually highlighted in the drawing and you will hear "a as in ice-skating" (meaning that hiragana "a" sounds like the first part of the first vowel in "ice-skating"). When you proceed further, parts of the drawing not highlighted gradually disappears leaving only hiragana "a" and the audio says "a". Pressing the proceed button once again, the somewhat odd-shaped "a" is replaced by a well-formed version, and you are prompted to type "a" on the keyboard. Memorizing kana is a memory-taxing task if done completely by rote. This program provides help through visual and verbal mnemonics. The drawing and the subsequent animation sequence provide the shape of kana while the mnemonic phrase links the drawing and the sound. The system thus helps establish an association between the shapes of kana and the sounds they represent.

The other two sections provide two kinds of kana recognition exercises. In the flashcards section, you first specify which row or rows of kana to be quizzed on. The program prepares randomly ordered stack of kana flashcards for you to go through. You can control the speed with the "Set interval" button. Once you start, you are presented with one kana syllabary at a time, to which you respond by typing in its *roomaji* representation. If you take too much time, the program will go on to the next item. Items missed will come back later systematically for reinforcement. Recognizing kana should become instantaneous for learners to start reading Japanese. This exercise is designed to develop that automaticity.

The Guessing Game is another type of recognition exercise in a game format. As with the flashcards exercise, you can specify which rows to work on. This game first presents you with nine panels arranged in a 3x3 format behind which hides a kana syllabary. The object is to guess what it is, removing as few panels as possible. The more panels you open, the lower your score becomes. This exercise is designed to sharpen your kana recognition skills, especially the ability to distinguish between similar ones; e.g. "re", "wa", and "ne", or "ha", "ho", "ke". If you know which one differs from which others in what way, you should be able to open panels strategically and improve your score.

In short, this is a good self-contained package providing learning aid and some fun in what could potentially be a tedious and difficult task.

Most appropriate venues for use: CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Note: I have successfully used kana with a large screen monitor for the whole class by dividing the class into teams to take turns trying to guess the hidden kana. The kana starts out being worth 10 points but loses one point for each tile turned. If a team ventures a guess but is wrong, it loses point. The team who can guess the kana on its turn gets whatever points are remaining for the kana. By calling on a different spokesperson for each group each time and requiring that students use Japanese (*3-ban onegai-shimasu.*), the teacher can present a lively and valuable activity (C.Darnall)

Kanalab 1.0

(Tim Naughton)

System Requirements: 700 KB free RAM; 650 KB of hard disk space; color monitor optional; JLK not required

Price: $25--Available from ftp.uwtc.washington.edu

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

Kanalab 1.0 is a hiragana and katakana shareware drill program offering very detailed progress reports. In a typical lesson, the computer will first show three kana for study. It shows the *roomaji* and the kana, and pronounces the character clearly in a native speaker's voice. Once the user clicks "OK," the program will drill the user faster than any human drillmaster could. The computer says the name of the character and shows it *roomaji*, and the user must then click on the corresponding kana from three shown on the screen. If the user is correct the computer repeats the kana selected and then immediately presents the next problem. If the user is mistaken, the computer still pronounces the selected kanji but does not proceed to the next problem. The computer continues the drill until each of the three characters has been correctly identified five times in a row, which is termed mastery. The computer switches the order of the kana choices on the screen almost every time. It drills the student particularly on the kana she or he is answering more slowly on and the kana where the student makes mistakes.

Once the student has successfully mastered the initial three kana, a fourth is introduced. There are now four choices for matching, and the choices are rearranged between problems. Mastery of the new kana brings in a fifth kana with five choices on the screen. Choices remain at five even after additional kana are entered. The user can choose to introduce additional kana into the mix at any time.

There are several useful features. For example, the user can adjust the various settings in the preference section. The number of kana appearing on the screen, the number of successive correct responses to show mastery, the number of new kana introduced at a time, the order or introduction, and other parameters can be controlled there. Also available at any time are detailed on-screen or printed progress reports showing the average time for each character introduced, the relative rate of identification compared to other characters studied, the success rate of the student in identifying that character, and the characters confused with the target character. Finally the current lesson can be saved so that the student can continue on where he left off.

The drilling is indeed intense. The student cannot stop the drill except to get a progress report or quit the program. Some students would object, but others might find it an efficient way to drill recognition of individual kana characters.

Most appropriate venues for use: SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Kanji Exercises No.1

(Anonae Software; distributors include Lingo Fun)

System Requirements: HyperCard 1.2 or higher, 1MB of free RAM, 3MB of disk space; JLK not required

Price: $65

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

Kanji Exercises No.1 is the first installment in Anonae's kanji exercise series containing 319 kanji and 900 words. The manufacturer's plan is to complete the series with the total of 2,000 kanji. The main part of the program consists of three HyperCard stacks organically linked to one another: character presentation, character reading exercises, and quizzes. There is also a sound stack containing model pronunciations.

The character presentation stack functions as a reference source providing KUN and ON readings, meaning in English, animated stroke order presentation, and pointers to other kanji with the same radical. Many characters have audio (KUN reading only) recorded for immediate play-back. In the character reading section, characters are grouped by subject matter into manageable sizes. When you choose a subject area, you are presented with two characters, each with three compound words. You can click on a word to display its reading. Clicking on the reading will give you its meaning. Clicking on an individual character will take you to an appropriate card in the reference stack. Words are carefully chosen so that the user can practice various readings of the kanji. This environment allows the learner to work on recognizing readings and meaning.

In the quizzes, characters are grouped by subject matter again. When you choose a subject area, 10 or more characters or words are displayed. At this point, you are to press either the "kana" button and/or the "English" button to reveal the reading and/or the meaning of the word in question to be used as a cue. You then answer by clicking on a word in the pool of choices. The reading of the word you choose is displayed separately, so that you can check your answer yourself. No judging is performed by the program.

The program lacks the ability to create a personalized list of kanji and it apparently does not go along with any textbook. Therefore, it might be difficult to use this program as a supplement to class work. It was probably designed for use in self-study, and it should serve this purpose well.

Most appropriate venues for use: CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

KanjiCard (Kazuko Nakajima)

System Requirements: CD-ROM drive; other requirements to be announced

Price: to be announced

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), first reviewed for **ACTFL '92**

KanjiCard is being revised for System 7. KanjiCard 1.0, the System 6 version, was a competitively priced, very useful multimedia aid for the learning of Japanese kanji characters. It allowed the reader to study 300 basic kanji which used 152 selected radicals and characters. Included were the 221 first and second year kanji from Japan, plus several others typically taught early to persons studying Japanese as a foreign language. The learner could locate a kanji he wished to study through one of five indexes: a *kun-on* sound index, an English meaning index, a radical index, a stroke number index, and a suggested learning sequence index. For each kanji, the student could access not only readings (in kana or romanized text) and compounds but also example phrases containing the kanji and compounds. All of these had clear, native speaker pronunciation available. The program provided animated stroke-order diagrams, isolated and identified the radical, and included printed, handwritten, and any classical forms of the character as well as the calligraphy-style example on the screen. What my high school students particularly enjoyed was the well-drawn, humorous animation which presented a mnemonic for each character. The program could also display a list of similar kanji from among the general use characters, and those which were in KanjiCard could be immediately referenced. For each kanji there was a "situation" selection typically showing the use of the kanji in a photograph of a building or an advertisement or another realia-based environment, often with a short cultural comment. Finally, there were self-testing options and a flash-card printing utility.

I hope that the new version will include more options for moving quickly from one kanji to another, including a browse mode and customized list creation. I do look forward in any case to the reintroduction of this useful and enjoyable program for helping students begin a study of kanji.

Most appropriate venues for use: WhGrp, SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

KanjiWorks Advanced Version 1.2 (Asia West; Cheng & Tsui now has a larger version.)

System Requirements: 68030 processor or better, System 7, 1.6 M free RAM; JLK not required but allows some additional features and slightly greater speed; full installation requires 7Mb of hard-disk space on non-JLK systems, 3.5 Mb on JLK systems.

Price: Full Version: $135 (educators' quantity discounts, site licenses available); 1000-Kanji Version $85.00

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

KanjiWorks is a powerful kanji reference and study tool involving multiple look-up possibilities. The full version contains 2,229 kanji, over 7,500 compounds, and over 3,000 sample sentences. KanjiWorks provides for each kanji all normal meanings and readings (in *roomaji* or in kana, if the JLK is available). It provides special readings used in names and indicates grade level. It can also display JIS, SJIS, Kuten codes, references numbers to major dictionaries (Nelson's, Halpern's, and Spahn & Hadamitzky) and Chinese readings. Radicals and elements are shown, with animated stroke order diagrams available for each of the elements. Windows containing compounds and example sentences can be opened. (Users can immediately reference any unknown kanji in the compounds and sentences as well.) There is a notepad available for each kanji for users to input their own mnemonics, additional compounds, or remarks. Users can "mark" kanji for additional review and create their own individualized study lists. Thus learners can browse grade-level or other lists and create personalized subsets for study. Teachers can prepare lists for their students to study. There are various quiz functions as well.

As a reference tool, users can look up a kanji by clicking on the radical and/or elements and/or stroke count from a chart. Kanji can also be references by entering the pronunciation in *roomaji* or kana (on JLK-systems), English meaning, or a word contained the notes section. Finally, on JLK systems, the kanji itself can be entered directly, pasted from another document, or read from a text file through a KanjiReader feature. This feature allows one to select kanji from a text (such as one received over the internet or scanned in from a newspaper), have any selected kanji displayed in a window above the text with meaning, pronunciations, reference numbers, and the particular compound it is used in the text. The program also contains a kanji converter for conversion between JIS and SJIS codes, which can help when trying to communicate in Japanese text over the internet.

In the future, I would like to see a CD-ROM version with pronunciations of compounds and example phrases. A teacher utility version that allows teachers to monitor student quizzes might also be helpful, provided quizzes are randomized each time. Teachers and students would also benefit from being able to mark compounds as well as individual kanji. Nevertheless, KanjiWorks is indeed a powerful tool for the serious student of Japanese.

Most appropriate venues for use: WhGrp, SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

MacSunrise Script 2000

(Stone Bridge Press)

System Requirements: 68030/25 MHz processor or higher; CD-ROM drive; ca. 5 MB hard disk space for controller programs; min. 3 MB free RAM (PowerPC w/ virtual memory on, 3602 w/ virtual memory off) or 4 MB free RAM (B/W mode), 5 MB free RAM (color mode) for non-PowerPCs; JLK not required for basic operation but necessary for readings if readings in kana are desired and for viewing of kanji lists outside the tutorial.

Price: $329 for Script 2000 (2000 kanji), $129 for Script 500 (500 kanji) (Includes KanjiTalk 6.07 for use with older machines)

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

MacSunrise Script 2000 is a powerful and attractively formatted kanji study tool that is one part of what the developers intend to develop into an "integrated software system for learning Japanese" that also includes the versatile **MacSunrise Kanji Dictionary** (sold separately.) Script 2000 opens with a lesson commander that allows the user to choose between hiragana, katakana, and various sets of kanji (for example, a first set of 100 kanji, the next 100 kanji, or kanji #201-#500).Each character's card displays the character in a clear, very large (almost 2") font along with the important readings and meanings in a small font. Readings are in romanized text unless the JLK is installed, in which case kana readings can be substituted. Meanings can be displayed in English or in Spanish, Portuguese, German, French, Italian, or Hungarian. Characters, readings, or meanings can be masked, allowing the users to test their own recall while studying. Also appearing on the main card for each kanji are the Spitz & Hadamitzky, the Nelson, and the JIS numbers.

There are several buttons on the main card, and additional windows are available. One button calls forth an animated stroke order diagram (each stroke appears in sequence, with the stroke direction indicated by the placement of the stroke number at the beginning of the stroke). A second button opens a window which displays a handful of common compounds in an easy-to-read large font. Compounds are chosen using only characters the student has already encountered in the learning sequence, and the user can click on any kanji in those compounds in order easily to study or review that kanji. A third button allows the user to hear pronunciations of either all of the important readings of the kanji or of just selected readings. A fourth button allows the user to record his voice in order to compare it to the sound sample for the kanji. A final button allows the user to

mark and unmark the kanji shown on the card for creation of personalized lists for further study.

Additional windows are also available. A browser window allows the user to select the next kanji, previous kanji, or a random kanji from the list for viewing. The browser can be automated, allowing for a rapid overview of the kanji with their pronunciations. The windows containing compounds for a kanji or the graphical information (graphemes and positions) of the kanji can also be browsed individually or in automated sequence. Users can enter notes into a characters/compounds field, a pronunciation field, and a meanings field.

Kanji can be searched for using grapheme (from the set of 80 used in the S&H dictionary.) Meaning and pronunciation-based searches allow for the entry of either/or parameters or wild cards. Other features include the ability to print flash cards of various sizes with various data enclosed.

MacSunrise 2000 is attractive and easy to use, especially if one is comfortable with the simplified grapheme system of the Spitz & Hadamitzky dictionary. The manual is easy to read and includes a discussion of the role of the various graphemes in determining the meaning and/or pronunciation of various characters; one slight omission was information on the voice recording). Having the important pronunciations of 2,000 characters instantly available is a strong point of the program. The voices speak rapidly but clearly, although the sound level was so high as to produce some muffling on my PowerMacintosh 5200/75. Earphones or external speakers might avoid the problem. The program would be even more effective if it included sample phrases for the kanji and compounds and included sound for them as well.

Most appropriate venues: SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Spectra Kanji

(Paradigm)

System Requirements: Should run on a 4-meg RAM system; ca. 5-6 Meg hard drive space; JLK not required

Price: $199 (same as Windows version already available)

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL)

Spectra Kanji, currently available for DOS-machines only but to become available for Macintosh Machines in the next few months, is a kanji study tutorial with some powerful features and options. The user has the ability to generate lists for study based on parameters he or she controls, including the relative frequency of use in Japanese newspapers, the stroke count, the grade level taught in Japan, or the index numbers in particular dictionaries, as well as meaning, reading, and components. Kanji can also be automatically pasted from a text file into a group or from one group into another. The program contains the 2,111 kanji for common use and names and even comes with kanji groups already generated for every issue to date of Mangajin magazine.

An overview list of kanji in any group is easily available. By clicking on any of these, the user enters the card view mode. Displayed attractively at the top of the card are the kanji itself in a large font, as well as its meaning its stroke count, grade level taught, relative frequency, and Nelson, Spahn and Hadamitsky, and O'Neill indices. Parts of the card can be masked. Readings are then given in *roomaji*, with capitals used for *on-yomi*., and with readings for names so indicated. What is particularly useful for non-native speakers learning the language is the list of graphical elements which follow, listed in the order in which they are written and with meanings and pronunciations (when the elements are stand-alone kanji as well), thus allowing the user to create his or her own mnemonics for remembering the kanji. By clicking on any of those graphical elements, the student can reference any of the graphical elements to see, for example, what other characters the elements are used in.

At the bottom of the card view are buttons allowing the display of useful reference lists. One list contains compounds which involve the various pronunciations. An advantage that might allow Spectra Kanji to be used for a large group presentation is that when the compounds are clicked on, an individual compound card appears in which the compound itself is written in the extremely large font. Another shows kanji which are contained within the kanji while another shows kanji which contain the target kanji within them. A final list

shows words containing the kanji or part of the kanji which have similar *on-yomi*, which helps the learner to begin to be able to guess the pronunciation of unfamiliar kanji in compounds.

Although the program does not allow the user to easily mark and unmark kanji from a group for additional study, it does have a useful related option. Then the student feels he has mastered a particular kanji, he or she can mark it as "familiar." It then appears in blue rather than black wherever and whenever the kanji appears in Spectra Kanji, even in other lists and compounds listed under other words. Fortunately for those of us who forget kanji we have already learned, the familiarity marking can be toggle back out. Each user can have his or her own personal list of familiar kanji; the next user merely keys in a his/her own list of familiar kanji

The labeling of the elements, the powerful search features, and the additional lists for creating groups are indeed strong points of Spectra Kanji. If I had my wish list, the mnemonics portion could be made even more valuable by including graphics showing sketches of how at least the basic graphemes came about, for example, how 子 could be derived from the picture of a child; and stroke order diagrams for those basic elements would also help the novice learner. Although the program lacks sentences showing how the kanji and compounds are used in context and voice recordings of the pronunciation of the kanji and compounds, it is still a very powerful study tool for the serious student of the written language at any level.

Most appropriate venues for use: WhGrp, SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

World Geography (Kazumi Hatasa and Sayuri Kubata)

System Requirements: HyperCard Player 2.1 or higher, 2.9MB of disk space; JLK not required

Price: Freeware available for download at ftp://intersc.tsukuba.ac.jp/pub/World/ (or through http://www.sla.purdue.edu/academic/fll/Japanese/).

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

World Geography is a collection of HyperCard stacks which provide students with practice in reading katakana through recognizing and producing katakana words. For this practice, names of countries in the world and US state names are used, most of which are written in katakana. Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, USA are covered. When you open each stack, you are presented with a map of a region. There are two modes of operation: look-up and exercises. In the look-up mode, you can click on any country or US state to hear it pronounced and see how it is written in katakana at the same time. When you switch to the exercise mode, you can specify the number of items to include in one session (randomly selected) and what type of exercise you want. There are three types: "click country", "listen name", and "type name", which are described below. "click country" - A country name is displayed at the top as a cue. You are to identify that country on the map by clicking on it. If you get it right, you will hear the name pronounced. If you make two mistakes, the program tells you the correct answer. "listen name" - A "let me listen" button appears at the top. You are to click on it to hear a country name and identify it on the map. "type name" - A question mark appears on a map. You are to identify that country and type in its name correctly in katakana using *roomaji* input. When your answer contains mistakes, the program provides useful feedback in the form of spelling error markup. For this purpose a small set of symbols are defined, which tells the user things like "there is a character missing here", "the voicing marker is missing", "the smaller version of this character is called for here", "this character doesn't belong here", etc. For each of the exercises, there is a review feature which automatically brings back items you have missed before for reinforcement. In short, this program provides a lot of practice in katakana and foreign names, and you can be sure that you will learn a lot about world geography at the same time.

Most appropriate venues for use: CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Other Software for Assisting in Reading:

AutoGloss/J

(Peter Henstock and Kazumi Hatasa)

System Requirements: HyperCard Player 2.2 or higher, 2.4MB of disk space; JLK required

Price: Freeware available for download at ftp://intersc.tsukuba.ac.jp/pub/AutoGloss/

(or through http://www.sla.purdue.edu/academic/fll/Japanese/).

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

AutoGloss/J is a program that takes a list of Japanese words you specify as input and automatically and efficiently generates a vocabulary list containing their reading and meaning in English. You can either import a whole passage into AutoGloss/J and choose vocabulary words from it, or type or paste words directly into it. This program makes use of a public domain Japanese-English dictionary with 30,000 entries. The output vocabulary list has tabs separating words, their reading, and meaning, so that when put into a Japanese word-processing document, the three columns can be lined up quickly.

This program is very useful for teachers preparing materials and for students who need to look up a large number of words quickly.

Most appropriate venues for use: RscRm, SlfSt, MatPr

CATERS

(Contact Person: Atsushi Fukada; By Chieko Kano, Keiji Yamagen, Atsushi Fukada, and Kazumi Hatasa)

System Requirements: 2.0 MB free RAM; JLK required

Price: Free for those willing to commit to piloting during 1996-1997

Announcement by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

CATERS stands for Computer-Assisted TEchnical Reading System and it was originally designed as an instructional/learning tool for Technical Japanese, but the system has turned out to be one which is equally usable for reading practice at all levels of non-technical Japanese. CATERS consists of two parts: a delivery system and an authoring system. Instructors can use the authoring system to create their own reading materials suitable for their students. The students then uses the delivery system to work on the prepared materials.

The delivery system itself has rather simple design. It first asks the students to select a reading passage to work on. It then displays the reading passage and does nothing after this point unless the users instruct it to. The system is equipped with a set of functions for facilitating reading which the users can call up anytime. The goal of the students, then, is to understand the passage with as few calls to the functions as possible. The functions provide help with both top-down and bottom-up processing.

The philosophy behind this design is as follows: Researchers agree that there is no direct way to teaching reading skills to the students. An activity which has been identified as the single most effective is extensive reading. The current design provides with the students a learning environment in which they practice extensive reading for content (as opposed to reading for language) at a reasonable speed. The role of the facilitating functions, then, is to minimize impediments and interruptions caused by difficult or unknown vocabulary items and/or structure, and encourage content-oriented reading. In this sense, the functions work as "training wheels": The more they can read without them, the better. Once they reach the point where they can comprehend materials of a certain level without the facilitating functions, they should move onto more advanced materials.

The following is a brief description of the functions designed to facilitate reading. The timed reading function measures one's reading speed, which serves two purposes. Firstly, the students can monitor their reading speed. Secondly, it encourages a more natural mode of reading employed by native readers, keeping them from falling in the trap of reading one word at a time. The global quiz

function presents a series of content questions pertaining to the main points of the passage. The students can check their understanding by taking this quiz. Since this is not a test, they can see the correct answers anytime. The paragraph quiz function presents questions pertaining to a particular paragraph the student wants to work on. Content as well as grammar/vocabulary questions can be presented here. The kanji dictionary search presents information on a particular kanji character at the student's request. The kanji reading function shows the reading of a particular kanji character at the student's request. The display sentence skeleton function displays in three different colors the skeleton (basic) structure of a particular sentence the student identifies. Phrase and sentence translation are also available. The student can also tap an interactive display of the structure of a sentence of his or her choosing. The student can examine the details of the sentence structure along with English translations. The program can also display the referent of a referring expression or show the scope of the modifying materials preceding a head noun.

The authoring component consists of three separate programs: Quiz Editor, Structure Editor, and Reference Editor. These programs do not require technical computer knowledge to operate. The quiz editor allows the instructor to input Global Quiz as well as Paragraph Quiz questions. The structure editor allows the instructor to input four types of information for each sentence in the passage: the skeleton structure, the detail structure, translations at all levels, readings of kanji characters if any. Obviously, this is the most time-consuming part of the authoring process. The program has been carefully designed to minimize the work of the operator. The data entered using this program is utilized by the following functions: Kanji Reading, Display Sentence Skeleton, Phrase Translation, Sentence Translation, Display Structure, and Show Scope. The reference editor allows the instructor to specify referring expressions in the passage and input their referents. The data entered using this program is utilized by the Show Reference function.

A package containing demo materials only should become available in a few months from anonymous ftp sites. Anyone interested in using it should be prepared to author materials for their class(es).

MacJDic 1.3.2

(Dan Crevier)

System Requirements: JLK, 607KB of free RAM, 5.3MB of disk space

Price: Freeware* available for download at ftp://ftp.cc.monash.edu.au/pub/nihongo/. The files needed are:

MacJDic1.3.4.hqx, edict, edict.doc, kanjidic, kanjidic.doc.

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

MacJDic is an electronic reference tool with Japanese-English, English-Japanese, and kanji dictionaries rolled into one and much more. The dictionary portion makes use of public domain Japanese dictionariescreated, maintained, and distributed for free by Prof. Jim Breen at Monash University. The user interface of MacJDic is nice and simple. When you open MacJDic, you have radio buttons for switching between the kanji lookup and J-E & E-J modes. In the J-E & E-J mode, if you type in an English word, e.g. "open", the program gives you a list of Japanese words which have the word "open" in their meanings. Search words don't have to be complete; you can type in as much as you are sure of. For example, if you type in とけ, it will find 時計, 吐血, 溶ける, etc. There is a useful option called "Look up all compounds". If this is turned on, in response to 深い, for example, the program will find you 疑り深い, 奥深い, 執念深い etc. If another option called "Try to deinflect verbs" is selected, and you type in a verb or adjective with kanji+kana, MacJDic will try to deinflect (or unconjugate) the verb. For example, if you search for 話します with deinflection turned on, it will find 話す. If the AutoPaste feature is selected fr om the Edit menu, every time you switch to the search window, it will paste the contents of the clipboard into the search field. This is useful if you will be copying things from another program to look up. In the kanji mode, you can look up kanji by its reading, meaning, stroke count, Nelson entry number, Heisig index, etc. There is also a button to bring up a list of radicals. Clicking on a radical searches all characters with that radical. Once a character is found, various information is displayed including its readings, meanings, stroke count, JIS code, grade level, etc.

In short, MacJDic is a very useful reference tool that every computer used for teaching/learning Japanese should have a copy of. Since it doesn't require a lot of RAM, it can comfortably run side by side with other programs like a word processor, an e-mail reader, a Web browser, and instructional programs.

*The author calls it "postcardware"--If you like the program, you are asked to send him a postcard!

Most appropriate venues for use:CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt, MatPr

Mikan, Version 1.0.1

(Sentius)

System Requirements: 68020 processor or better, System 7.1 or higher, JLK or KanjiTalk 7.1 or higher, 1MB free RAM (2MB recommended for opening multiple books and a dictionary), 6.2MB of hard disk space.

Price: $149

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

Mikan is a computer-assisted reading comprehension program with a powerful word database function. It comes with two electronic books, "A Primer on the Japanese Economics" (ten chapters) by Yasuo Hirata, Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha and five short stories by Takashi Atoda, both of which are written for native readers. The first book is semi-technical and can only be recommended to the most advanced students. The second book is much lighter although, being an authentic material, it is by no means easy. When a book is opened, the text is presented in a scrollable window, much like a word processing environment. When you encounter an unfamiliar word or phrase, you can click on it to call up Mikan's on-line annotation feature, which provides (1) meaning in English, (2) dictionary form, (3) reading (in the case of kanji), and (4) notes on grammar and idioms (when available). Not every word is annotated, but most content words are. The manufacturer claims that this instant dictionary look-up takes away the painful and agonizing hours of looking up words and kanji in a dictionary, allowing the user to concentrate on the content of the book. If there were hundreds of books covering all levels and various interests, this system would be very valuable. There are no comprehension exercises supplied with the books.

Another component of the program is a personal word list which comes with 500 basic words pre-installed. When you encounter an unknown word, you have the option of adding it to the list for future study. There is a "jump to text" feature which allows the user to go back to the portion of the text in which the word was found, presumably to see how it is used. There is also a flashcard function which turns vocabulary cards at a specified interval, but with the full word information displayed at all times, it is of limited utility. When you are NOT in the flashcard mode, it is possible to show/hide the translation and notes.

Mikan is a self-study tool with future potential and useful for highly advanced and motivated students.

Most appropriate venues for use: RscRm (for enrichment) SlfSt

Understanding Written Japanese I / II

(Contact Person: Hiroshi Nara)

System Requirements: CD-ROM drive; Hypercard 2.2; Apple Sound Manager 3.0; JLK

Price: To be announced when a distributor has been found

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), first reviewed for **ACTFL '92**

Interactive Japanese: Understanding Written Japanese I / II provides the user with a great wealth of realia-based reading material for computer-assisted study. The first set, reviewed in 1992, is primarily aimed at students at an advanced beginner to intermediate level in their study of written Japanese. Though the examples below refer to the first set, the second set, which is aimed at advanced learners and contains advanced texts, continues the thorough and praiseworthy emphasis on crucial reading skills.

The central part is a set of ten lessons, each containing several sublessons based on real-life-type examples of Japanese script and focusing on various reading skills such as skimming, scanning, complete comprehension, critical reading, or task-oriented reading. Through pull-down menus, students can easily remind themselves of what reading skills they are focusing on or see a listing of important grammatical topics incorporated into the text. Students can also easily call up the meanings of words, phrases, and sentences in each text. Many of the selections in **UWJ** are task-based, such as choosing a restaurant based on information the learner can glean from shop fronts or reading the directions on a package of curry or frozen pizza. Lessons 1-5 are primarily realia-based materials, much of which is in the form of scanned-in photographs of signs or products. Lessons 6-10 are more in the form of memos, diary readings, directions, letters, and short essays. A useful feature of lessons 6-10 is that any sentence in the texts can be heard read by a native speaker by simply clicking on the sentence and using a pull-down menu option.

Each sub-lesson includes clearly stated objectives and instructions. The program provides comprehension questions which tie into the nature of the reading task being focused on. Scanning and skimming tasks have time limits which the user can adjust to provide an appropriate level of challenge. The program keeps track of each user's score and the amount of time spent on a task. This information can be saved on disk for students' or teacher's later reference.

Tests are included at the end of each lesson, but some are more like games than the typical tests students take. In chapter one, for example, the learner

Software Aimed at Younger Learners:

All-in-One Language Fun!

(Syracuse Language Systems; Distributors include Lingo Fun)

System Requirements: LCII or better, color monitor, System 7.0 or newer; JLK not required

Price: $39.95

Review by Atsushi Fukada, Purdue University (IN)

All-in-One Language Fun! is a CD-ROM-based collection of simple games designed for language practice. It contains games for Spanish, French, German, English in addition to Japanese. For Japanese there are 27 games each of which has several variations. (Many of the games, however, are of the same format with different vocabulary words.) Most of the games proceed as follows: First, you are presented with objects to click on (presentation phase). For instance, by clicking on a picture of a bicycle you hear a native speaker say "jitensha". A more advanced example would be "hon o yondeiru onnanoko" for a girl reading a book. When you are ready to go on, you press the "proceed" button to enter the quiz phase. Here you hear "jitensha", for example, as a cue with several pictures on the screen. You are to answer by clicking on the right picture. In this phase you have access to the "level" button, which will take you to progressively more difficult variations of the same game. For example, you may hear "jitensha, beddo, ie" and be asked to click on the right pictures in the right order.

All the games make use of extensive graphics and audio. In fact, the package says "Ages 3-12" as their intended audience. Clicking the mouse button is the only skill needed to play these games. The audio is recorded by several different native speakers, both male and female. The way they pronounce Japanese, however, is slow and unnatural and very monotonous, which is unfortunate. For example, when you come to the game selection screen, you hear "geemu o (pause) erandekudasai". I also encountered a few instances of questionable sentences and usage. In regard to the language content, there is an exercise on telling time, which could be used as a computer lab activity at a relevant point in a first-year course. Other items include colors, objects, shapes, sizes, clothing items, parts of the face, animals, common verbs, modes of transportation, classroom objects, fruits, vegetables, tableware, food & drinks, numerals 1-24, and objects at home.

Most appropriate venues for use: CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

Just Grandma and Me

(Broderbund)

System Requirements: CD-ROM drive; 256-color mode; 2.5 MB free RAM; JLK not required

Price: Street Price from computer catalogs or superstores: $35-40

Review by Cliff Darnall, Elk Grove High School (IL), first reviewed for **ACTFL '92**

Based on a "Little Critter" children's story of the same title by Mercer Meyer, **Just Grandma and Me** was the first of Broderbund's CD-ROM Living Book Series and is the only one to include Japanese. The user chooses the language (English, Spanish, or Japanese) and mode. The first mode is "Read to Me," a story-telling mode, in which the narration is given in clear CD-sound in the selected language, accompanied by music and various sound effects. Each page has animation, and the pages advance automatically. The text in the Japanese version is in hiragana. The other mode is the "Let Me Play" mode, in which the story is read but the computer pauses before turning the page; the user can then click on various parts of each picture. Many of these "hot spots" just produce animated sequences involving the object clicked on, but several of the sequences in this mode present humorous, idiomatic mini- dialogues in a family setting.

The program is very appealing, especially to young children. Though not designed for language learning as such, it could be integrated into an elementary immersion program or serve as listening comprehension source for a third or fourth year high school Japanese class. (Though its a book for children, many high school students were kids once and are still "kids" at heart!).

Most appropriate venues for use: WhGrp, SmGrp, CmpLb, RscRm, SlfSt

(Addresses follow on next page.)

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